



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

NOTES.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE PHILOSOPHICAL REVIEW :

Dear Sir—With reference to Dr. Montague's interesting article in the PHILOSOPHICAL REVIEW for January, 1902, entitled "Professor Royce's Refutation of Realism," I should like space to point out what I consider to be an error in the argument. A personal acquaintance with both gentlemen concerned in the difference of opinion, together with considerable correspondence which has passed between us three at times, entitles me to feel that I shall not be confusing the issue in fixing special attention upon one particular paragraph in the article named.

Thus, on page 45 of the REVIEW, Dr. Montague defends the realistic doctrine of the independence, or as he prefers ambiguously to call it, separateness, of subject and object by a metaphor borrowed from the field of psychology, the figure of an objective 'chair' which does not lose objective existence as a 'chair' when by closing one's eyes one destroys or alters substantially the visual 'idea' of the chair in question. One need not consider the school-boy difficulty with the disconnected 'gunpowder' and 'fuse'; but it is fair to say that Dr. Montague's subsequent argument in detail is at every point parallel to the logic of this special figure and stands or falls with its validity.

Now, if the *petitio principii* involved in this chair-metaphor were less generally committed without detection, one would suppose that its statement would be its own exposure. And its plausibility, though doubtless deeply seated in our mental constitution, would seem inexplicable unless as a matter of mere carelessness in language. For the alleged object and the alleged idea simply do not belong together, 'chair' being taken objectively in one meaning, subjectively in quite another. It will never do, in fact, to cite in defence of realism the lack of coördination between a 'chair' and an 'idea of a chair' which turns out to be merely a momentary sensuous impression! For, in such a defence, the 'separateness' under dispute is preassumed in the sensuousness of the psychological metaphor; and the lack of coördination follows of course. It is a perfectly valid idealist retort, to point out that any somewhat constructive or solidly constituted 'chair,' whether it is 'that special chair' or not, is the object, not of any excited retinal nerve-feelings merely, but of an active agglomeration or organization of innumerable stored-up and also present nerve-experiences, which, less or more remotely, bear upon the momentary retinal sensation, interpret it and constitute its intelligible meaning as an item within a personal universe. If the self-contained idea would be blank without the subsidiary sensuousness which belongs to its complex constitution as intelligence, yet it is hard to see how sensation as pure externalism or unintelligibility can even be referred to or intended by Dr. Montague or

any one else. And if the mere sight of the 'chair' refers at all to what one means by 'chair,' the 'idea of a chair' is only subsidiarily an impression from without.

To any observer whose sight-sensations mean anything whatsoever, that is to a sane observer, the obliteration (or substantial alteration) of the momentary retinal image does, to be sure, Dr. Montague notwithstanding, obliterate (or substantially alter) precisely 'that special chair which I now see in so far as I now merely see it.' The hitherto existing object becomes in all truth non-existent. And, instead of the said meaningless object, arises a new one: "that special chair which a moment ago I saw but now do not see." In which alteration there is no lack of mutual independence in any sense. In this regard, Dr. Montague has merely failed to describe the insignificant sense-object 'chair' which properly belonged to his so-called 'idea of a chair.'

But, again, accepting the intelligible object Dr. Montague describes, and constructing for him the true subjective correspondent upon which it depends, let us see whether in his illustration there is any alteration in the one without appropriate alteration in the other. For Dr. Montague's mistake is made plausible by the fact that it would be only perhaps under unusual and petty conditions of strained self-stultification, sometimes called experimentation, when the alteration of merely sensuous object to correspond with the altered mere impression of the hypothesis would be of any noticeable consequence as a factor in the intellectual construct, 'that solid chair.' Yet, to an observer in full possession of his rational faculties, the true object of his 'idea (not visual image merely) of a chair' would, when put out of sight, be altered nevertheless inevitably and in appropriate manner, by the admission into it of some varying degree of probability as to how much or how little the position, form, color, or what not which is usually visualized, would on a second view be altered to the sense. Any elements of experience you please can enter into the determination of such probabilities; but the objective chair at any instant of non-visualization is precisely to the least detail the determinately problematical item I have just defined: "that special chair which at some future moment may be seen to be more or less altered into another similar thing also called chair; and which is now, as I know, in continuous alteration of certain definite sorts, physical, chemical, or mechanical."¹ There is no lack of mutual dependence in the matter, when once a mere sensuousness of experience (*i. e.*, epistemologically speaking, separateness) is not preassumed. And relative 'independence' in Dr. Montague's sense, is black white, pre-

¹ This "continuous-alteration" feature of the description I have added with a view to rebutting Dr. Montague's apparent opinion that an object, to correspond to a new idea, must alter by cataclysm and hiatus. But it is the characteristic of time as an alterative manifold, that all its particles, while remaining utterly distinct and each entirely unique, also interpenetrate. Therefore the "continuance" (more correctly, continuity) of an object is not incompatible with dependence upon an altering idea.

cisely. The manner of the dependence, or rather reference, of subject and object *inter se* is, to be sure, as to subject and object respectively, as different as possible ; but the mutuality of reference, which needs no preposterously alien 'artificial' self to account for the disparity between its terms is inevitable. And any other arrangement (if the bull may be pardoned !) would be nihilism pure and simple.

REGINALD C. ROBBINS.

Professor Frederick J. E. Woodbridge, of the University of Minnesota, has been appointed to the chair of philosophy in Columbia University, made vacant by the appointment of Professor Nicholas Murray Butler to the presidency.

The Senatus Academicus of the University of Edinburgh has appointed the Rev. Henry Melvill Gwatkin, M.A., D.D., Dixie Professor of Ecclesiastical History in the University of Cambridge, to the Gifford lectureship for 1903-1905.

The death is announced of J. M. D. Meiklejohn, Professor of Education in the University of St. Andrews, Scotland. Professor Meiklejohn is best known in America as the translator of Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*.

Dr. Charles H. Judd has resigned his position in the University of Cincinnati to accept an Instructorship in Psychology in Yale University.

A psychological laboratory of six rooms has been recently opened at Mount Holyoke College. It is in charge of Miss Helen B. Thompson, Ph.D., instructor in the department of philosophy.